

A  
HEALING  
QUESTION  
PROPOUNDED  
AND  
RESOLVED,

Upon occasion of the late publique  
and seasonable Call to  
HUMILIATION,

In order to love and union amongst the  
honest party, and with desire to apply  
Balsome to the Wound before  
it become incurable.

---

BY  
HENRY VANE, *Knight.*

---

LONDON,  
Printed for T. Brewster at the three Bibles at the  
West end of Pauls. 1656.

THE FALLING  
QUESTION  
PROPOSED  
AND  
RESOLVED

Upon occasion of the late publication  
and formidable City  
HUMILIATION

In order to love and union amongst the  
humblest, and with desire to apply  
reason to the Word before  
it become sensible

BY  
HENRY VANE, Knight.

LONDON:  
Printed for J. Benger at the Green Bible at the  
West end of Pauls. 1656.





*A Healing Question propounded and resolved, upon occasion of the late publique and seasonable call to Humiliation, in order to love and union amongst the honest party; and with a desire to apply Balsome to the wound, before it become incurable.*

**T**He Question propounded is, What possibility doth yet remain (all things considered) of reconciling and uniting the dissenting judgements of honest men within the three Nations, who still pretend to agree in the spirit, justice, and reason of the same good cause; and what is the means to effect this?

*Ans.* If it be taken for granted (as on the Magistrates part, from the ground inviting the people of *England* and *Wales* to a solemn day of fasting and Humiliation, may not be dispaired of) that all the dissenting parties agree still in the spirit and reason of the same righteous cause, the resolution seems very clear in the affirmative; arguing not onely for a possibility, but a great probability hereof, nay a necessity daily approaching neerer and neerer to compell it, if any or all of the dissenting parties intend or desire to be safe from the danger of the common enemy, who is not out of work, though at present much out of sight and observation.

The grounds of this are briefly these: First, the cause hath still the same goodnesse in it as ever; and is or ought to be as much in the hearts of al good people that have adheared to it: It is not lesse to be valued now, then when neither blood nor treasure were thought too dear

to carry it on, and hold it up from sinking; and hath the same Omnipotent God, whose great Name is concerned in it, as well as his peoples outward safety and welfare; Who knows also how to give a revivall to it, when secondary instruments and visible means fail, or prove deceitful.

Secondly, The Persons concerned and engaged in this Cause, are still the same as before; with the advantage of being more tried, more enured to danger and hardship, and more endeared to one another, by their various and great experiences, as well of their owne hearts as their fellow Brethrens. These are the same still in heart and desire after the same thing, which is, that being freed out of the hands of their enemies, they may serve the Lord without fear, in holinesse and righteousness all the daies of their life.

As they have had this great good finally in their aims (if Declarations to men, and Appeals to God signifie any thing) so, as a requisite to attain this, they did with great cheerfulness & unanimity draw out themselves to the utmost, in the maintenance of a war, when all other means, first essayed proved ineffectual. In the management of this war, it pleased God (the righteous Judge, who was appealed to in the controversie) so to bless the Council and Forces of the persons concerned and engaged in this cause, as in the end to make them absolute and compleat Conquerors over their common Enemy. And by this meanes they had added unto the naturall right which was in them before (and so declared by their Representatives in Parliament assembled) the right of Conquest for the strengthening of their just claim to be governed by National Councils, and successive Representatives of their own election and setting up. This they once thought they had been in possession of, when it was ratified, as it were, in the blood of the last King; But of late a great interreption having happened unto them in their former expectations, and instead thereof,

some



(3)

Something rising up that seems rather accommodated to the private and selfish interest of a particular part (in comparison) then truly adequate to the common good and concern of the whole Body engaged in this Cause: Hence it is that this compacted body is now falling asunder into many dissenting parts (a thing not unforeseen, nor unhop'd for by the common Enemy all along as their last relief) and if these breaches be not timely healed; and the offences (before they take too deep root) removed, they will certainly work more to the advantage of the common Enemy, then any of their own unwearied endeavours, and dangerous contrivances in forraign parts put all together.

A serious discussion, and sober enlarging upon these grounds, will quickly give an insight into the state of the Question, and naturally tend to a plain and familiar resolution thereof.

That which is first to be opened, is the nature and goodness of the Cause; which had it not carried in it its own evidence, would scarce have found so many of the people of God adherers to it, within the Three Nations, contributing either their counsels, their purses, their bodily pains, or their affections and prayers, as a combined strength; without which, the military force alone would have been little available to subdue the common Enemy, and restore to this whole body their just natural Rights in civil things, and true freedom in matters of conscience.

The two last mentioned particulars, rightly stated, will evidence sufficiently the nature and goodness of this Cause.

For the first of these, that is to say, the Natural right, which the whole party of Honest men adhering to this Cause, are by success of their Arms restored unto, fortified in, and may claim as their undeniable privilege, that righteously cannot be taken from them, nor they,

they debarred from bringing into exercise, it lies in this:

They are to have and enjoy the freedom (by way of dutifull compliance and condiscention from all the parts and members of this society) to set up meet persons in the place of Supreme Judicature and Authority amongst them; whereby they may have the use and benefit of the choicest light and wisdom of the Nation that they are capable to call forth, for the Rule and Government under which they will live; and through the orderly exercise of such measure of wisdom and counsel as the Lord in this way shal please to give unto them, to shape and form all subordinate actings and administrations of Rule and Government, so as shall best answer the publique welfare and safety of the whole.

This, in substance, is the right and freedom contained in the nature and goodnesse of the cause, wherein the honest party have been engaged: For in this, all the particulars of our civil right and freedom are comprehended, conserved in, and derived from their proper root; in which whilst they grow, they will ever thrive, flourish, and increase: whereas on the contrary, if there be never so many fair branches of liberty planted on the root of a private and selfish interest, they will not long prosper, but must within a little time, wither and degenerate into the nature of that whereinto they are planted: And hence indeed sprung the evil of that Government which rose in and with the Norman conquest.

The root and bottom upon which it stood, was not publique interest, but the private lust and will of the Conqueror, who by force of armes did at first detain the right and freedom which was, and is, due to the whole body of the people: for whose safety and good, government it selfe is ordained by God, not for the particular



ticular benefit of the Rulers, as a distinct and private interest of their own; which yet, for the most part, is not onely preferred before the common good, but upheld in opposition thereunto. And as at first the Conqueror did, by violence and force, deny this freedom to the people, which was their natural right and priviledge; so he, and his Successors all along, lay as bars & impediments to the true National interest, and publique good, in the very National Councils and Assemblies themselves; which were constituted in such a manner, as most served for the upholding of the private interest of their Families. And this being challenged by them as their Prerogative, was found by the people assembled in Parliament, most unrighteous, burdensome, and destructive to their liberty: And when they once perceived that by this Engine all their just rights were like to be destroyed, especially (being backed, as it was, with the power of the militia, which the late King, for that purpose, had assumed into his hands, and would not, upon the peoples application to him in Parliament, part with into the hands of that great Council, who were best to be intrusted with the Nations safety:) this was the ground of the quarrel, upon a civil account between the King and his party, and the whole body of adherents to the cause of the peoples true liberty; whereof this short touch hath been given, and shall suffice for the opening of the first branch of this clause.

The second branch which remains briefly to be handled, is that which also upon the grounds of naturall right is to be laid claime unto; but distinguishes it self from the former, as it respects a more heavenly and excellent object, wherein the freedom is to be exercised and enjoyed, that is, to say matters of Religion, or that concern the service and worship of God.

Unto this freedom the Nations of the World have right and title, by the purchase of Christs blood; who  
by

(6)

by vertue of his death and resurrection is become the sole Lord and Ruler in and over the conscience; for to this end Christ died, rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living; and that every one might give an account of himself, in all matters of Gods worship, unto God and Christ alone, as their own Master, unto whom they stand or fall in judgement, and are not in these things to be oppressed, or brought before the Judgement-seats of men. For why shouldst thou set at naught thy Brother in matters of his Faith and conscience, and herein intrude into the proper office of Christ, since we are all to stand at the Judgement-seat of Christ, whether Governours or governed, and by his dicision only are capable of being declared with certainty, to be in the right or in the wrong?

By vertue then of this Supream Law, sealed and confirmed in the blood of Christ unto all men (whose souls he challenges a propriety in, to bring under his inward rule in the service and worship of God) it is that all Magistrates are to fear and forbear intermedling with giving rule or imposing in those matters. They are to content themselves with what is plain in their commission, as ordained of God to be his Minister unto men for good, whilest they approve themselves the doers of that which is good in the sight of men, and whereof earthly and worldly Judicatures are capable to make a clear and perfect judgement: In which case the Magistrate is to be for praise and protection to them. In like manner he is to be a Minister of terrour and revenge to those that doe evil in matters of outward practice, converse, and dealings in the things of this life between man and man, for the cause whereof the judicatures of men are appointed and set up. But to exceed these limits, as it is not safe nor warrantable for the Magistrate (in that he who is higher then the highest, regards, and will shew himself displeased at it) so nei-  
ther



ther is it good for the people, who hereby are nourished up in a biting, devouring, wrathful spirit one against another, and are found transgressors of that Royal law which forbids us to doe that unto another, which we would not have them do unto us, were we in their condition.

This freedome then is of high concern to be had and enjoy, as well for the Magistrates sake, as for the peoples common good; and it consists, as hath been said, in the Magistrates forbearing to put forth the power of rule and coercion of things that God hath exempted out of his Commission. So that all care requisite for the peoples obtaining this, may be exercised with great ease, if it be taken in its proper seson, and that this restraint be laid upon the Supreme Power before it be erected, as a fundamental Constitution among others, upon which the free consent of the people is given, to have the persoons brought into the exercise of Supreme Authority over them, and on their behalf, and if besides, as a further confirmation hereunto, it be acknowledged be the voluntary act of the ruling Power, when once brought into a capacity of acting Legislatively, that herein they are bound up, and judge it their duty so to be (both in reference to God the Institutor of Magistracy, and in reference to the whole Body by whom they are entrusted) this great blessing will hereby be so well provided for, that we shall have no cause to fear, as it may be ordered.

By this means a great part of the outward exercise of Antichristian Tyranny and bondage will be plucked up by the very roots; which till some such course be held in it, will be alwayes apt to renew and sprout out afresh, under some new forme, or refined appearances, as by late years experience we have been taught. For since the fall of the Bishops and persecuting Presbyteries, the same spirit is apt to arise in the next sort of Cler-

gy, that can get the ear of the Magistrate, and pretend to the keeping and ruling the conscience of the Governours. Although this spirit and practice hath been all along decried by the faithful adherents to this Cause, as a most fore oppression, and insufferable yoke of bondage, most unrighteously kept up over the consciences of the people; and therefore judged by them most needful to be taken out of the way. And in this matter the present Governors have been willing very eminently to give their Testimony, in their publique Declarations, however in practice there is much of grievance yet found among us, though more, in probability, from the officiousness of subordinate Ministers, than any clear purpose or designe of the chief in power.

Having thus shewed what the true freedom is, in both the branches of it, that shines forth in the righteous Cause, wherein the good people of these Nations have so deeply engaged: It will not be improper in the next place to consider two particulars more that give still further light into the matter in question; as first The qualifications of the Persons that have adhered to this Cause. Secondly, the capacity wherein they have been found from time to time carrying it on.

As to their Qualification, they have in the general, distinguished themselves and been made known, by a forwardness to assist and own the publique welfare and good of the Nation, for the attaining and preserving the just rights and liberties thereof, asserted and witnessed unto in the true stating of this Cause, according to the two branches thereof already spoken to. They have shewed themselves, upon all occasions, desirers and lovers of true freedom, either in civils, or in spirituals, or in both. To express their value thereof, and faithfulness to the same, they have largely contributed, in one kind or other what was proper to each in his place to doe; with actions of theirs proceeding from hearts sincerely affected



(9)

affected to the cause, created in them a right to be of an Incorporation and Society by themselves, under the name of the good Party; having been from the beginning unto this day publicquely and commonly so acknowledged, by way of distinction from all Neuters, close and open Enemies, and deceitful Friends or Apostates. These, in order to the maintaining of this Cause, have stood by the Army, in defence and support thereof, against all opposition whatever, as those that, by the growing light of these times, have been taught and led forth in their experiences, to look above and beyond the letter, forme, and outward circumstances of government, into the inward reason and spirit thereof, herein only to fix and terminate, to the leaving behind all empty shadows, that would obtrude themselves in the place of true freedom.

Secondly, as to the capacity wherein these persons, thus qualified, have acted, it hath been very variable, and subject to great changes: sometimes in one forme, and sometimes in another, and very seldome, if ever at all, so exactly, and in all points consonant to the rule of former Laws and Constitutions of Government, as to be clearly and fully justified by them, any longer then the Law of Success and Conquest did uphold them who had the inward warrant of Justice and Righteousnesse to encourage them in such their actions.

The utmost and last reserve therefore which they have had, in case all other failed, hath been their military capacity, not only strictly taken for the standing Army, but in the largest sense, wherein the whole party may (with the Army, and under that military constitution and conduct, which by the providence of God they shall then be found in) associate themselves in the best order they can, for the common defence and safety of the whole. As not ignorant, that when once embodied

bodied in this their Military posture, in such manner as by common consent shall be found requisite for the safety of the body, they are most irresistible, absolute, and comprehensive in their power; having that wherein the substance of all Government is contained, and under the protection whereof, and safety that may be maintained thereby, they can contrive and determine, in what manner this irresistible, absolute, and boundless power, unto which they are now arrived in this their Military capacity shall have just and due limits set unto it, and be drawn out in a meet and orderly way of exercise, for the Commonweale and safety of the whole Body, under the rule and oversight of a Supreme Judicature; unto the wisdom of whose laws and orders, the sword is to become most entirely subject and subservient: And this without the least cause of jealousy or unsafety, either to the standing Army, or any member thereof, or unto the good people adhering to this Cause, or any one of them; since the interest of both, by the mutual action of either, will be so combined together in one (even in that wherein before they were distinct) that all just cause of difference, fear, animosity, emulation, jealousy, or the like, will be wholly abolished and removed.

For when once the whole Body of the good people find that the Military interest and capacity is their own, and that into which necessity at the last may bring the whole Party (whereof of right a place is to be reserved for them) and that herein they are so far from being in subjection or slavery, that in this posture they are most properly sovereign, and possess their right of natural sovereignty, they will presently see a necessity of continuing ever one with their Army raised and maintained by them, for the promoting this Cause against the common Enemy; who in his next attempt will put for all with greater desperatenesse and rage then ever.

baibod

Again,



Again, when once the standing Army and their Governours shall also find, that by setting and keeping up themselves in a divided interest from the rest of the Body of Honest men, they withhold from themselves those contributions in all voluntary and cheerful assistances, by the affections and prayers, by the persons and purses of the good party, to the weakning themselves thereby, as to any vigorous support from them, in the times of most imminent danger (whereof the late King had an experience, that will not suddenly be out of memory, when he undertook the war in the beginning of these troubles, against the Scots, and was, in a manner, therein deserted by all the good party in *England*) they will then find (if they stay not till it be too late) that by espousing the interest of the people, in submitting themselves with their fellow adherents to the Cause, under the rule and authority of their own Supream Judicature, they lose not their Power or Sovereignty; but becoming one Civil or Politique Incorporation with the whole party of honest men, they do therein keep their Sovereignty, as originally seated in themselves, and part with it only but as by deputation and representation of themselves, when it is brought into an orderly way of exercise, by being put into the hands of persons chosen and intrusted by themselves to that purpose.

By this mutual and happy transition which may be made between the party of Honest men in the Three Nations virtually in Arms, and those actually so now in power at the Head of the Army, how suddenly would the union of the whole Body be consolidated, and made so firm as it will not need to fear all the designs and attempts of the common Enemy; especially if herein they unite themselves in the first place to the Lord, as willing to follow his providence, and observe his will in the way and manner of bringing this to passe. In  
which

which case we shall not need to fear what all the gates of hell are able to do in opposition thereunto.

It is not then the standing and being of the present Army and Military forces in the three Nations, that is lyable to exception of offence; from any dissenting judgements at this time amongst the honest well affected party. In and with them, under God, stand the welfare and outward safety of the whole body; and to be enemies to them or wish them hurt, were to doe it to themselves; and by trying such conclusions to play the game of the common enemy, to the utter ruine and destruction, not only of the true freedom aimed at and contended for in the late wars, but of the very persons themselves that have been in any sort active or eminent promoters thereof.

The Army considered as it is in the hands of an honest and wise General, and sober faithful Officers, embodied with the rest of the party of Honest men; and espousing still the same cause, and acting in their primitive simplicity, humility, and trust, in reference to the welfare and safety of the whole body, is the only justifiable and most advantageous posture and capacity that the good party at present can finde themselves in, in order to the obtaining that true freedom they have fought for, and possessing of it in the establishment thereof upon the true Basis and foundation, as hath been shewed of right Government.

That wherein the offence lies, and which causes such great thoughts of heart amongst the honest party (if it may be freely expressed, as sure it may, when the Magistrate himselfe professes he doth but desire and wait for conviction therein) is in short this.

That when the right and priviledge is returned, nay is restored by Conquest unto the whole Body (that forfeited not their interest therein) of freely disposing themselves in such a constitution of righteous Government



verment, as may best answer the ends held forth in this Cause; that nevertheless, either through delay they should be withheld as they are, or through design they should come at last to be utterly denied the exercise of this their right, upon pretence that they are not in capacity as yet to use it; which indeed hath some truth in it, if those that are now in power, and have the command of the Arms, do not prepare all things requisite thereunto, as they may, and like faithful Guardians to the Commonwealth, admitted to be in its nonage, they ought.

But if the bringing of true freedome into exercise amongst men, yea, so refined a party of men, be impossible; why hath this been concealed all this while? and why was it not thought on before so much blood was spilt, and treasure spent? surely, such a thing as this was judged real and practicable, not imaginary and notional.

Besides, Why may it not suffice to have been thus long delayed and withheld from the whole body, at least as to its being brought by them into exercise now at last? surely the longer it is withheld, the stronger jealousies do increase; that it is intended to be assumed and ingrossed by a part onely, to the leaving the rest of the body (who in all reason and justice ought to be equally participants with the other in the right and benefit of the Conquest, for as much as the war was managed at the expence and for the safety of the whole) in a condition almost as much exposed, and subject to be imposed upon, as if they had been enemies and conquered, not in any sense Conquerors.

If ever such an unrighteous, unkinde and deceitful dealing with brethren should happen, although it might continue above the reach of question from humane judicature, yet can we think it possible it should escape

escape and go unpunished by the immediate hand of the Righteous Judge of the whole World, when he ariseth out of his place to do right to the oppressed?

Nay, If in stead of favouring and promoting the peoples common good and welfare, self-interest and private gain should evidently appear to be the things we have aimed at all along; if those very Tyrannical principles and Antichristian reliques, which God by us hath punished in our predecessors, should again revive, spring up afresh, and shew themselves lodged also and retained in our bosomes; rendring us of the number of those that have forgot they were perged from their old sins, and declaring us to be such as to please a covetous minde, do withhold from destruction that which God hath designed to the curse of his vengeance: If all those great advantages of serving the Lords will and design in procuring and advancing his peoples true welfare and outward safety, which (as the fruit of his blessing upon our Armies) have so miraculously fallen into our hands; shall at last be wrested and mis-improved to the enriching and greatning of our selves: If these things should ever be found amongst us (which the Lord in mercy forbid) shall we need to looke any further for the accursed thing? will not our Consciences shew us from the light of the Word and Spirit of God, how neer a conformity these actions would hold therewith? which sin, *Josh. 7.* became a curse to the Camp, and withheld the Lord from being any more amongst them, or going out with their forces. And did the action of *Achan* import any more then these two things. First, he saved and kept from destruction the goodly Babylonish garment, which was devoted by God thereunto. Secondly, he brought not in the fruit and gain of the Conquest into the Lords Treasury; but covetously went about to convert it to his own



own proper use. To doe this is to take of the acur-  
sed thing, which *Josb. 7.* all Israel was said to do, in  
the sin of *Achan*, and to have stollen and dissembled  
likewise, and put it amongst their own stufte. This  
caused the anger of the Lord to kindle against Israel,  
and made them unable to stand before their enemies,  
but their hearts melted as water. And thus far the  
Lord is concerned, if such an evil as this shall lie hid in  
the midst of us. But to return to what we were upon  
before.

The matter which is in question among the dissen-  
ting parts of the whole body of honest men, is not so  
trivial and of such small consequence, as some would  
make it. 'Tis in effect, the main and whole of the  
Cause; without which all the freedom which the  
people have or can have, is in comparison but shadow  
and in name onely, and therefore can never give that  
peace and satisfaction to the body, which is requisite  
unto a durable and solid settlement. This is that which  
makes all sound & safe at the root, and gives the right  
ballance necessary to be held up between sovereignty  
and subjection, in the exercise of all righteous Go-  
vernment; applying the use of the sword to the pro-  
moting and upholding the publike safety and welfare  
of the whole body, in preference and if need be in op-  
position unto any of the parts; whilst yet by its equal  
and impartial administration in reference unto each,  
it doth withall maintain the whole Body in a most  
delightful harmony, welfare and correspondency.  
The sword never can, nor is it to be expected ever will  
do this, while the sovereignty is admitted and pla-  
ced any where else, than in the whole Body of the  
people that have adhered to the cause, and by them be  
derived unto their successive Representatives, as the  
most equal and impartial Judicature for the effecting  
hereof.

Where there is then a righteous and good constitution of Government, there is first an orderly union of many understandings together, as the publique and common Supream Judicature or visible Sovereignty, set in a way of free and orderly exercise, for the directing and applying the use of the ruling power or the sword, to promote the interest and common welfare of the whole, without any disturbance or annoyance, from within or from without. And then secondly, there is a like union and readiness of will in all the Individuals, in their private capacities, to execute and obey (by all the power requisite, and that they are able to put forth) those sovereign Laws and Orders issued out by their own Deputies and Trustees.

A Supream Judicature thus made the Representative of the whole, is that which we say, will most naturally care, and most equally provide for the Common good and safety. Though by this it is not denied; but that the supream power, when by free consent 'tis placed in a single person or in some few persons, may be capable also to administer righteous Government; at least the Body that gives this liberty, when they need not, are to thank themselves if it prove otherwise. But when this free and natural access unto Government, is interrupted and declined, so as a liberty is taken by any particular member, or number of them, that are to be reputed but a part in comparison of the whole, to assume and engross the office of sovereign rule and power, and to impose themselves as the competent publique Judge of the safety and good of the whole, without their free and due consent; and to lay claim unto this, as those that find themselves possessed of the sword (and that so advantageously, as it cannot be recovered again out of their hands, without more apparent danger and damage to the whole Body, than such attempts are worth.)



worth) this is that Anarchy that is the first rise and step to Tyranny; and lays grounds of manifest confusion and disorder; exposing the ruling power to the next hand that on the next opportunity can lay hold on the sword; and so, by a kind of necessity, introduces the highest imposition and bondage upon the whole Body, in compelling all the parts though never so much against the true publique interest, to serve and obey, as their sovereign rule and supreme Authority, the Arbitrary will and judgment of those that bring themselves into rule by the power of the sword, in the right only of a part that sets up its self in preference before, or at least in competition with the welfare of the whole:

And if this, which is so essential to the well being and right constitution of Government, were once obtained, the disputes about the form would not prove so difficult, nor find such opposition, as to keeping the bone of contention and disunion, with much danger to the whole. For if as the foundation of all, the sovereignty be acknowledged to reside originally in the whole body of adherents to this Cause ( whose natural and inherent right therunto is of a far antienter date than what is obtained by success of their arms, and so cannot be abrogated even by Conquest it self if that were the case ) and then if in consequence hereof, a supreme Judicature be set up and orderly constituted, as naturally arising and resulting from the free choice and consent of the whole Body taken out from among themselves, as flesh of their flesh, and bone of their bone, of the same publique spirit and nature with themselves, and the main be by this means secured; what could be propounded afterwards, as to the form of administration that would much stick.

Would a standing Council of State settled for life, in reference to the safety of the Commonwealth, and for the maintaining intercourse and commerce with Foreign States, under the inspection and oversight of the supreme Judicature, but of the same fundamentall constitution with themselves, would this be disliked? admitting their orders were binding, in the intervals of Supreme Nationall Assemblies, so far onely as consonant to the settled Lawes of the Commonwealth, the vacancy of any of which by death or otherwise, might be supplied by the vote of the major part of themselves. Nay, would there be any just exception to be taken, if (besides both these) it should be agreed (as another part of the fundamentall constitution of the Government) to place that branch of Sovereignty which chiefly respects the execution of Lawes, in a distinct office from that of the Legislative power (and yet subordinate to them and to the Lawes) capable to be entrusted into the hands of one single person, it need require, or in a greater number, as the Legislative power should think fit; and for the greater strength and honour unto this Office, that the execution of all Lawes and Orders (that are binding) may go forth in his, or their name; and all disobedience thereunto, or contempt thereof, be taken as done to the peoples Sovereignty, whereof he or they bear the Image or Representation, subordinate to the Legislative power, and at their will to be kept up and continued in the hands of a single person or more, as the experience of the future good or evill of it shall require.

Would such an Office as this, thus stated, carry in it any inconsistency with a free State? Nay, if it be well considered, would it not rather be found of excellent use to the well-being of Magistracy, founded upon this righteous bottome, that such a Lieutenancy of the peoples sovereignty in these three nations, may  
always



alwayes reside in some one or more person, in whose administration, that which is reward and punishment may shine forth?

And if now it shall be objected, that (notwithstanding all these Cautions) should once this Sovereignty be acknowledged be in the diffused body of the people (though the adherents to this cause, not onely as their naturall, but as their acquired right by Conquest) they would suddenly put the use and exercise of the Legislative power into such hands, as would, through their ill qualifiednesse to the work spoyl all by misadministration thereof, and hereby lose the cause in stead of upholding and maintaining it.

The answer unto this is, First, that God by his providence hath eased our minds much in this solicitude, by the course he hath already taken to fit and prepare a choyce and selected number of the people unto this work, that are tryed and refined by their inward and outward experiences in this great quarrell, and the many changes they have passed through: in respect whereof wel qualified persons are to be found, if due care be but taken in the choyce of them. And if herein this people of the Lord shall be waiting upon him for his guidance and presence with them, we may have grounds & hope that God (whose name hath all along been called upon in the maintaining of this cause) will pour out so abundantly of his Spirit upon his people attending on him in righteous wayes, and will also so move their hearts to choose persons bearing his image into the Magistracy, that a more glorious product may spring up out of this, than at first we can expect, to the setting up of the Lord himselfe, as chief Judge and Lawgiver amongst us. And unto this the wisdom and honesty of the persons now in power may have an opportunity eminently to come into discovery: For in this case, and upon the grounds already

dy layed, the very persons now in power are they unto whose lot it would fall to see about this preparatory work; and by their orders and directions to dispose the whole Body and bring them into the meetest capacity to effect the same. The most natural way for which would seem to be by a Generall Council, or convention of faithful, honest, and discerning men chosen for that purpose by the free consent of the whole body of adherents to this Cause in the several parts of the Nations, and observing the time and place of meeting appointed to them (with other circumstances concerning their election) by order from the present ruling Power, but considered as Generall of the Army.

Which Convention is not properly to exercise the Legislative power, but only to debate freely, and agree upon the particulars, that by way of Fundamentall Constitutions shall be laid and inviolably observed, as the conditions upon which the whole body so represented, doth consent to cast it self into a Civill and politique Incorporation, and under the visible form and administration of Government therein declared, and to be by each individuall member of the Body subscribed in testimony of his or their particular consent given thereunto. Which conditions so agreed (and amongst them an Act of Oblivion for One) will be without danger of being broken or departed from; considering of what it is they are the conditions and the nature of the Convention wherein they are made; which is of the people represented in their highest state of Sovereignty, as they have the sword in their hands, unsubjected unto the Rules of Civill Government, but what themselves orderly assembled for that purpose, doe think fit to make. And the sword upon these conditions subjecting it self to the suprem Judicature, thus to be set up; how suddenly might  
 harmony



harmony, righteousness, love, peace, and safety unto the whole Body follow hereupon, as the happy fruit of such a settlement, if the Lord have any delight to be amongst us.

And this once put in a way, and declared for by the General and Army, (as that which they are clearly convinced in the sight of God, is their duty to bring about, and which they engage accordingly to see done;) how firmly and freely would this oblige the hearts and persons, the counsels and purses, the affections and prayers, with all that is in the power of this whole party to doe, in way of assistance and strengthening the hands of those now in power, whatever straits and difficulties they may meet with in the maintenance of the publique safety and peace?

This then being the state of our present affairs and differences, let it be acknowledged on all hands, and let all be convinced that are concerned, that there is not onely a possibility but a probability, yea a compelling necessity of a firm union in this great Body, the setting of which in joynt and tune again, by a spirit of meeknesse and fear of the Lord, is the worke of the present day, and will prove the onely remedy under God to uphold and carry on this blessed cause and work of the Lord in the three Nations, that is already come thus far onwards in its progresse to its desired and expected end of bringing in Christ, the Desire of all Nations, as the chiefe Ruler amongst us.

Now unto this re-uniting work let there be a readiness in all the dissenting parts from the highest to the lowest, by cheerfully coming forth to one another in a spirit of self-denial and love in stead of war and wrath, and to cast down themselves before the Lord, who is the father of all their spirits in self-abasement and humiliation, for the mutual offence they have bin

in for some time past, one unto another, and great provocation unto God, and reproach unto his most glorious name, who expected to have been served by them with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

And as an inducement unto this, Let us assure ourselves, the means of effecting it will not prove so difficult as other things that have been brought about in the late war, if the minds and spirits of all concerned were once well and duly prepared hereunto, by a kindly work of self denial and self-abasement, set home by the spirit of the Lord upon their consciences which if he please, he may do we know not how soon. Nay we shall behold with a discerning eye the inside of that work which God hath been doing amongst us the three years last past, it would seem chiefly to have been his aim, to bring his people into such a frame as this is. For in this tract of time, there hath been ( as we may say ) a great silence in Heaven, as if God were pleased to stand still and be as a looker on, to see what his People would be in their later end, and what work they would make of it, if left to their own wisdom and Politick contrivances. And as God hath had the silent part, so men, and that good men too, have had the active and busie part, and have like themselves made a great sound and noise, like the shout of a King in a mighty Host; which whilst it hath been a sound onely and no more, hath not done much hurt as yet; but the fear and jealousie thereby caused, hath put the whole Body out of frame, and made them apt to fall into great confusions and disorder.

And if there be thus arisen a general dissent and disagreement of parts ( which is not, nor ought to be accounted the lesse considerable, because it lies hid and kept in under a patient silence ) why should there  
not



not be as general a confession and acknowledgment of what each may find themselves overtaken in, and cannot but judge themselves faulty for? This kind of vent being much better than to have it break out in flames of a forward and untimely wrathful spirit, which never works the righteousness of God. Especially since what hath been done amongst us, may probably have been more the effect of temptation than the product of any malicious design; and this sort of temptation is very common and incident to men in power (how good soever they may be) to be overtaken in, & thereupon do sudden unadvised actions, which the Lord pardons & over rules for the best: evidently making appear that it is the work of the weak & fleshly part, which his own people carry about with them too much unsubdued. And therefore the Lord thinks fit by this means, to shew them the need of being beholding to their spiritual part, to restore them again, and bring them into their right temper and healthful constitution.

And thus whilst each dissenting part is aggravating upon it self faultinesse and blame, and none excusing, but all confessing they deserve, in one sort or other, reproof if not before men, yet in Gods sight: Who knows how soon it may please God to come into this broken, contrite, and self denying frame of Spirit in the good People within the three Nations, and own them thus truly humbled and abased, for his Temple and the place of his habitation and rest, wherein he shall abide for ever? of whom it may be said God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her and that right early; or with his morning appearance. At which time he will sit silent no longer, but Heaven will speak again, and become active and powerful in the spirits and hearts of Honest men, and in the works

of his providences, when either they go out to fight  
 by Sea or by Land, or remaine in counsell and de-  
 bates at home for the publique Weal, and again  
 hear the prayers of his People, and visibly own them  
 as a flock of holy men, as *Jerusalem* in her solemn  
 Feasts. *I will yet for this be enquired of by the House*  
*of Israel, saith the Lord, to do it for them:* And then  
 they shall know that I the Lord their God am  
 with them, and that they are my People,  
 and that ye my flock the flock of my pa-  
 sture, are men that have shewed your  
 selves weak sinful men, and I am  
 your God that have declared  
 my self an all-wise & pow-  
 ersfull God, saith the  
 Lord God.

---

Post-script.

---





## POST-SCRIPT.

READER,

**U**Pon the perusal of this Discourse thou wilt quickly perceive that these two things are principally aimed at in it by the Author. First to answer in some measure that which is called for by those in power, when they publickly profess they desire nothing more than conviction, and to find out the hidden provocations which either have or yet may bring forth the Lord against these Nations, in the way which at present they are in.

Secondly, To remove out of the minds and spirits of the Honest party, that still agree in the reason and justice of the good old Cause, all things of a private Nature and selfish Concern (the tendency whereof serves but to foment and strengthen wrath and divisions amongst them) and in place thereof to set before them that common and publique interest, which (if with sincerity embraced) may be the means of not only procuring a firm union amongst them, but also of conserving them herein.

In order to this, the Author hath not been willing so much to declare his own Opinion, or deliver any positive Conclusions, as to discusse the businesse by way of question and answer, and thereby make as neer a conjecture as he can, of that, wherein the severall dissenting parts may with better satisfaction meet together, and agree upon a safe and righteous bottome, than to remaine at the distance they do, to the apparent

rent advantage of the common Enemy; the approaching  
ruine of themselves, and needless hazard (if not  
losse) of the Cause they have been so deeply engaged  
in. Especially considering that when once they shall  
be sound beginning to come forth to one another, in such  
a condescending self denying spirit, & cleansed from the  
stain of hypocrisie and deceit, they may be well assu-  
red that light will spring up amongst them more and  
more unto a perfect day; and then those things which  
at present we have next in view, will prove as sha-  
dowes ready to flee away before the morning brightness  
of Christs Heavenly Appearance and second Coming;  
through which they will be heightened and improved  
to their full maturity, to the bringing in that King-  
dome of his that shall never be moved.

And because an Essay hath been already made,  
in a private way to obtain the first thing, that is to say,  
Conversion, which chiefly is in the hand of the Lord to  
give; the same obligation lies upon the Author, with  
respect to the second, for the exposing of it as now it  
is unto Ruklick view, and therein leaving it also with  
the Lord; for his blessing thereunto.

---

F I N I S.

---

erot  
/



